WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1.   An inspection method for inspecting information stored in terminals that are included in a network, comprising the step of:

5   using a program module which moves between the terminals and checks if a digital watermark is embedded in the information.

2.   The method according to claim 1, wherein when the program module determines that a digital watermark is
10   embedded in the information, the information is downloaded from the terminal to an inspection server.

3.   The method according to claim 1, wherein when the program module determines that the digital watermark is embedded in the information, the program module then
15   checks, based on the digital watermark, if the user of the terminal is an authentic user of the information.

4.   An inspection system comprising an inspection host for moving a program module, which checks if a digital watermark is embedded in information stored in
20   a terminal, between terminals that are included in a network.

5.   A recording medium that stores a program module which moves between terminals that are included in a network and checks if a digital watermark is embedded
25   in information stored in the terminal.

6.   An inspection method comprising:

a step of disclosing a digital watermark extraction technique on a network;

a step of installing the digital watermark extraction technique in a terminal which desires the installation of the digital watermark extraction technique; and

an inspection step of inspecting authenticity of information in the terminal using the digital watermark extraction technique installed in the terminal.

7.   The method according to claim 6, further comprising a step of informing, when illicit use of information is detected in the inspection step, a copyright protection terminal of the detection via the network.

8.   An inspection method comprising:

a step of disclosing a digital watermark extraction technique on a network;

a step of licensing a terminal which is included in the network to use the digital watermark extraction technique;

a step of installing the digital watermark extraction technique in another terminal via the use-licensed terminal; and

an inspection step of inspecting authenticity of information in the other terminal using the digital watermark extraction technique installed in the other terminal.

9.   The method according to claim 8, further comprising a step of informing, when illicit use of information is detected in the inspection step, a copyright protection terminal of that detection via the network from the other terminal.

10.   An inspection system comprising a digital watermarking technique server which discloses a digital watermark extraction technique on a network, and licenses a terminal which is included in the network to use the digital watermark extraction technique.

11.   An inspection method comprising:

an accept step of accepting a purchase application of information via a network;

a presentation step of presenting a technique used to protect a copyright of the information via the network;

a providing step of providing the information to the user when an agreement with the technique of the user who applied for purchase of the information is confirmed; and

an inspection step of inspecting authenticity of the information using the technique.

12.   The method according to claim 11, wherein the presentation step includes a step of presenting a measure to be taken against the user who illicitly used the information.

13. The method according to claim 11, wherein the presentation step includes a step of presenting to the user an extraction program which gives an explanation about a digital watermark extraction method, and can

5 inspect digital watermark embedded in the information, and

the providing step includes a step of embedding, when identification information of the user is confirmed together with the agreement, the user

10 identification information in the information as a digital watermark, and providing that information to the user.

14. An inspection system comprising an information vendor server which accepts a purchase application of

15 information from a user via a network, presents a technique used to protect a copyright of the information to the user via the network, and obtains a user's agreement for the technique as a sales condition of the information.

20 15. An inspection method comprising:

a storage medium providing step of providing a storage medium which stores enciphered information embedded with storage medium identification information as a digital watermark;

25 a presentation request step of requesting the user to present the storage medium identification information and user identification information;

a providing step of providing a decipher program
of the enciphered information to the user in the
presence of the presentation; and

an inspection step of inspecting authenticity of

5   information by comparing the user identification
information associated with the storage medium
identification information embedded as the digital
watermark in the information, and user information of a
terminal that stores the information.

10   16.   An inspection system that sells enciphered
information which is stored in a storage medium and is
embedded with storage medium identification information
as a digital watermark,

said system providing decipher software of the

15   enciphered information to a user when the user presents
the storage medium identification information and user
identification information,

managing the storage medium identification
information and user identification information in

20   correspondence with each other, and

inspecting authenticity of information by
comparing the user identification information
associated with the storage medium identification
information embedded as the digital watermark in the

25   information, and user information of a terminal that
stores the information.